



# Report and Recommendations for Creating a Consumer Protection Call Center in Egypt

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## **Report and Recommendations for Creating a Consumer Protection Call Center in Egypt**

Pursuant to Egypt's Consumer Protection Law, enacted by Law Number 67 of 2006, Article 12, a Consumer Protection Authority ("the Authority" or "CPA") shall be established to implement the provisions of the law. Among other responsibilities, the Authority is to "receive and investigate the complaints made by the Consumers and Associations." To carry out this responsibility the Ministry of Trade and Industry intends to create a Consumer Call Center which will receive complaints from Egyptian citizens about problems they encounter in the marketplace, provide consumers with useful information for avoiding such problems, attempt to resolve consumer complaints through mediation and, if mediation is unsuccessful, forward the unresolved complaints other individuals in the Authority for possible enforcement action.

The Authority has requested a report from ATR on the following issues:

- The topics that will be of greatest importance to consumers who contact the call center, based on the experience of similar US call centers and Egyptian consumer protection NGOs;
- Procedures that can be used by Call Center Representatives ("CCRs") to assist consumers file complaints; and
- Mediation models used by similar US consumer protection agencies and Egyptian consumer protection NGOs that provide guidance as to how the Authority can similarly use mediation to informally resolve consumer complaints.

This report concludes with a discussion of the resources needed to successfully run a Consumer Call Center and mediation program, and sources of funding for the Call Center.

In preparing this report, the following individuals representing various government agencies and NGOs have been consulted:

- Mostafa Aboul Enein, Chairman, Commercial Registry Authority
- Jaleen Moroney, Chief of Party, IPR Assistance Program, USAid
- Seham Saad Zaghlol Mohammad, General Manager, IPR, Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- Khaled Hegazy, External Relations Manager for Proctor & Gamble, Egypt and Chairman of the Brand Protection Group
- Salma Mameish, British and American Tobacco representative and Vice Chairman of the Brand Protection Group
- Hany Loka, Senior Vice President, Siemens Ltd. and Finance Director of the Brand Protection Group.
- Moustafa El-Shafie, IPR Specialist, IPR Assistance Program, USAid

- Gamal Zagzuk, Engineer and Chairman of the Consumer Protection Association, Alexandria
- Sherif Fatouh, Professor and Vice Chairman of the Consumer Protection Association, Alexandria
- Zeinab Awadallah, Professor and Chairman of the Society for Consumer Protection, Cairo
- Mohamed-Hossam Loutfi, Attorney, Professor and Legal Advisor for the Society for Consumer Protection, Cairo
- Frank Williams, Legislation, Policy & Health Law Consultant, Toronto, Ontario

### **Types of Calls Anticipated**

Based on information obtained from the Society for Consumer Protection<sup>1</sup>, the Authority can expect that most consumer problems will involve common durable consumer goods and services. During 2005 and thus far in 2006, the Society received 64 and 150 complaints respectively. The following is a list of the products about which the Society for Consumer Protection received the most consumer complaints in 2005 and 2006 combined:<sup>2</sup>

- Appliances
- Cleaning / Garbage Collection
- Foodstuffs
- Invoices and Commercial Fraud
- Garments and Footwear
- Telecommunications / Internet / Communications
- Cellular sets
- Vehicles
- Furniture
- Public Transportation
- Utilities / Services
- Maintenance Centers

To ensure that it will be able to effectively handle the number of calls received initially by the Call Center, the Authority may want to start by providing assistance to only those consumers who have complaints involving certain types of products. As the CCRs become more adept at responding to and

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<sup>1</sup> The Society for Consumer Protection was formed in 2002 to provide assistance to consumers in the Giza area of Cairo through the provision of consumer education programs and the mediation and investigation of consumer complaints. See Attachment 1.

<sup>2</sup> See Attachment 2. Note that because the categories used in 2005 differed slightly from those being used in 2006, exact statistics are not available. However, the list provided here accurately reflects the most common problems reported.

processing calls and/or resources are increased, the Authority can broaden its assistance to other product types.<sup>3</sup>

As the Call Center becomes better utilized, more detailed information regarding specific types of products and practices should be developed for CCRs to use to address consumer questions about those products and practices such as door-to-door sales and installment sales.

### **Anticipated Topics of Interest to Consumers**

The information requested by callers to consumer protection call centers can be broken down into the following categories:

- how consumers can avoid having problems with merchants;
- whether a merchant's practice is "illegal" or improper;
- how consumers can effectively address their complaints with a merchant; and
- how consumers can obtain assistance in resolving their complaint if they are unable to do so directly with the merchant.

However, most calls received by consumer call centers involve all four of these types of questions. Therefore, Call Center Representatives need to be well-versed on all of the following information.

### **How to Avoid Problems in the Marketplace – Shopping Tips**

The following "tips" will be useful to consumers who contact the call center prior to making major purchases. By providing these tips, CCRs will help consumers make wise purchasing decisions and avoid disputes with merchants:

- Do research to learn about the brands and models of the item you wish to purchase and the features of each. Review advertisements and ask friends and family for their recommendations. If you have internet access, there are many sites that provide information that will help you find the brand and model that is best for you. These sites often also compare the quality and features offered by various brands.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Another way to control the roll-out of the Call Center would be to limit its assistance to a specific geographic area which can be increased as the Center gains experience and/or resources.

<sup>4</sup> While there are, unfortunately, no publications akin to the US *Consumer Reports* magazine currently available for Egyptian consumers, this void may present an opportunity for business and consumer NGO collaboration. With funding from the business community, consumer NGOs could hire independent research and testing firms to report on various important consumer products such as appliance, electronics, household goods, etc. and then publish the results for consumer use.

- Compare the prices and features offered by several merchants for the brands and model(s) you are interested in. Think about what features you really need given the price you will pay for them. If you have questions about the purpose or benefit of any of the product's features, ask the merchant for information. However, if you base your decision on any representations made by the merchant, make sure you get those representations in writing on the sales invoice. If the merchant refuses to put his representations in writing, choose another merchant for your purchase.
- Don't make purchasing decisions on impulse. Take your time and be wary of salespeople who try to pressure you into buying with claims that the price is for "today only." Buy only after you have finished comparing prices.
- Don't assume that a store's "sale" price is the cheapest price you can find. You may find that one store's "regular" price is cheaper than another's "sale" price.
- Find out if the government has set standards for the product by calling Egyptian Organization for Standards. Look at the product's packaging for a label listing those standards. If there is no label or the product doesn't meet the government standards, don't buy that item.
- Find out if the product comes with a written warranty and ask to review it. While you may pay a little less for goods that do not come with a warranty, a warranty will protect you if the product fails during the warranty period. Make a note of: how long the warranty lasts, what the company will do if the product fails, who you will have to contact if you need warranty service, what parts/problems are covered by the warranty, and whether there are any limitations or conditions on that affect the warranty. Also read the instructions for using the product since warranties do not cover the item if used in unintended ways.
- Compare merchants' return policies for non-defective goods. Some may offer cash refunds for merchandise returned within a stated period of time while others may only offer a store credit for any non-defective items or no refunds at all. If the return period is very limited, make sure you are satisfied with the item before you purchase it.<sup>5</sup>
- Unless you are intending to purchase a used item, make sure the item is new. It should be in a sealed carton and the model year stated on the carton should be current. Keep an eye out

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<sup>5</sup> This tip assumes that the Authority will provide shorter time periods for the return of certain non-defective items as provided in Article 8 of the Consumer Protection Law.

and refuse items that are labeled "remanufactured" or "repackaged." These are items that were previously returned by other customers for repairs and then placed in new boxes to be re-sold to other consumers.

- Before making your purchase, let the merchant know that you want an invoice documenting the purchase. Under the Consumer Protection Law, merchants must give you an invoice if you request one. If the merchant refuses to give you an invoice, don't buy the product from that merchant and report the refusal to the Consumer Protection Authority at (telephone number). Check the invoice before you leave the store to make sure it includes the following information:
  - i. Date of purchase
  - ii. Price
  - iii. A description of the nature and type product being purchased
  - iv. Any standards required for the product
  - v. The number of products being purchased
  - vi. Other statements or promises the merchant made to you about the product. (e.g. "this washing machine will clean heavy-duty items such as overalls, uniforms, bedspreads and draperies)

#### How to Avoid Problems in the Marketplace - Avoiding Scams

Over time, the Authority will learn about fraudulent practices used by con-artists to deceive consumers into buying low quality, defective or over-priced merchandise. Providing information about such scams will, obviously, help consumers avoid them. From discussions with government and NGO representatives, it appears likely that the following scams (which are also seen in the US) are in use in Egypt currently or will be in the near future:

- Bait and switch advertising – This term refers to a practice in which a merchant "baits" the consumer by advertising an item for a low price but then, when the consumer goes to the store, attempts to "switch" the consumer to a similar but more expensive item by claiming that it is far superior in quality to the one advertised. While low-income Egyptian consumers (who appear to be primarily price-driven in their selections) may not be easily "switched," more affluent consumers may fall prey to this type of deceptive practice.
- "Re-manufactured" or "re-packaged" goods - Such goods are those that have previously been returned to the merchant or manufacturer due to defects. The defective goods may then repaired (or not) and re-packaged in a new box with new packing materials and then sold to consumers. If the consumer understands the history of the goods, the defect has been

corrected and the price discounted accordingly, the consumer may be able to save money by buying such items. However, re-manufactured goods are often passed off by unscrupulous merchants as new and sold for the same price as new products. Consumers, therefore, should be alert for indicators that suggest the product is not new.

- Counterfeiting – Clothes, jewelry, electronics and other items sold by street vendors that look like expensive name-brand products are usually counterfeit copies of the real thing. Such counterfeit products don't save consumers money if they work poorly or don't work at all. And, counterfeit items aren't just sold by street vendors – retail stores may also sell counterfeit goods. Consumers should be skeptical of goods that are sold at drastically lower prices than those usually charged for the item.

#### "Is it legal to....."

Some consumers may contact the Call Center to find out whether something that a merchant has done is "legal" or improper in some way. While CCRs must be cautioned against attempting to give legal advice, they can provide consumers with information about the responsibilities and duties of both consumers and merchants derived from the consumer protection law. Armed with this information, consumers can then assess their situations and attempt to address their complaints directly with merchants. CCRs can also use this opportunity to encourage consumers to file complaints if they are unsuccessful in resolving the dispute directly with the merchant. The following are some likely questions that consumers may have about the Consumer Protection Law, along with basic responses that can be provided by the CCRs.

- Is it legal to sell goods without giving an invoice?
  - A merchant must provide an invoice if the consumer requests one.
- Is it legal for a merchant to refuse to give me an invoice if I ask for one?
  - No. The law requires merchants to give an invoice if the consumer asks for one.
- What should I do if the merchant won't give me an invoice?
  - Go to another merchant for your purchase.
- What if I paid the merchant before asking for an invoice and he then refused to give me one?

- You may wish to try going back to the merchant with a copy of the law (which can be faxed or mailed to the consumer)<sup>6</sup> and asking again for an invoice for your purchase. Or, you may simply file a complaint with the Authority by contacting the Consumer Call Center.<sup>7</sup>
- Is it legal for a merchant to refuse to take back defective goods?
  - If you attempted to return the defective goods within 14 days of purchase, the merchant must either exchange the good for goods that are not defective or take the goods back and give you a refund.
- Is it legal for a merchant to refuse to take back non-defective goods?
  - Depending on the type of goods purchased and on the merchant's return policy, the may or may not be required to take the goods back. Any limitation on the return of non-defective goods should be disclosed on the merchant's invoice.<sup>8</sup>
- Is it legal for a merchant to advertise a price for a product in the newspaper and then refuse to sell it to me at that price?
  - No. A merchant is required to provide consumers with correct information about its products and avoid anything that would mislead or confuse the consumer.

### How to Complain Effectively to the Merchant

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<sup>6</sup> Thought should be given to finding locations where consumers can get copies of the portions of the law such as this one, as well as copies of consumer publications that address other specific issues. In the US, public libraries are often good places for consumers to obtain such information. Other public places such as police stations, government buildings may be useful. Churches, mosques and temples and non-secular organizations such as cultural clubs, may also be willing to act as distribution points for their members.

<sup>7</sup> Article 5 of the Consumer Protection Law, while requiring a merchant to provide an invoice upon the consumer's request, does not provide a remedy for consumers if a merchant fails to do so. Therefore, thought must be given to whether a consumer can file a complaint regarding a merchant's failure to provide a invoice. If consumers can file such complaints, thought must then be given to whether consumers must first complain to the merchant. Article 8 of the Act requires the consumer to complain to the merchant before complaining to the authority about defective products only. If the consumer is dealing with a single person or family-owned businesses, this requirement would likely be ineffective and serve only to create a hurdle for consumers to jump before filing a complaint with the Authority. However, if the consumer is dealing with a merchant that is big enough to have a hierarchy of employees, requiring the consumer to complain to the store manager or customer service department may have some merit.

<sup>8</sup> See footnote 2, above.

Many of the consumers who contact the Call Center may be inexperienced in making their grievances known to the merchants they deal with. Such callers may begin the call by asking something like "My new washing machine just broke down. What can it do?"

It is, therefore, vital that the CCRs be able to empower consumers to exercise the rights that they have obtained through the passage of the new Consumer Protection Law by making their complaints known to the merchants they patronize. The following tips on how to complain effectively can also be recorded as "sound bites" for consumers to listen to while they are on hold for a CCR to assist them.

- Be prepared for problems before they develop by keeping records of your purchases, including the invoice and warranty documents.
- Report the problem to the merchant as soon as possible but no later than 14 days from the date of purchase.
- Talk to the person in authority. Sales clerks may be able to make decisions about how to address your problem, but if the sales clerk cannot help you or if you are not satisfied with the response, ask for the manager or another person at the store who can assist you. If the person you are speaking with is willing to look into your complaint, give him time to check with others and call you back.
- Tell the person in authority what the problem is and exactly what you want (for example a refund of your money).
- Remain calm. You may have to tell your story more than once. Have a reasonable attitude and try not to become frustrated or lose your temper. If you are angry, you are more likely to present your case in a way that diverts attention away from the real issue.
- If the merchant refuses to provide the relief you suggest, ask him what he is willing to do and consider that offer carefully. Let the merchant know if you would like more time to think about it.
- If you are dissatisfied with the merchant's offer, tell him why and discuss other options reasonably.
- If you are dealing with a chain merchant (one with more than one location), send a letter to the company's headquarters, and a copy of the letter to the store manager. You may also be able to contact the company's headquarters by telephone. Many companies have a toll-free numbers for their Customer

Assistance Departments.<sup>9</sup> If you send a letter, explain as briefly as possible what the problem is, what you want done, the steps you have taken to resolve the dispute with the store and how you can be reached (telephone number, address, etc). Include a copy (not the original) of your invoice and any other relevant documents.

- If you are unsuccessful in getting the merchant to resolve the dispute, contact the Call Center again for instructions on how to file a complaint.

### How to File a Complaint with the Consumer Protection Authority

To assist a consumer who wishes to file a complaint, the CCR will first need to ascertain whether the consumer's complaint is one that is within the Authority's jurisdiction and whether the consumer has met the criteria set forth in the Consumer Protection Law. By asking the following series of questions, CCRs will be able to effectively screen consumers for those who are ready to file complaints.

What is the nature of the consumer's complaint?

- The product is defective
  - Did the consumer attempt to resolve the problem with the merchant within 14 days of purchase?
    - If yes, continue with screening.
    - If no, the CCR should educate the consumer on the need to complain to the merchant within 14 days of purchase.
- Did the merchant offer to repair or replace the item or allow the consumer to return it for a refund? If yes, why was the consumer dissatisfied with the offer? The CCR may need to discuss with consumer what expectations are reasonable.
- Does the consumer have documentation of the purchase (the invoice)?
  - If yes, can the consumer fax or mail a copy (not original) to the Authority?
    - If yes, the consumer can file a complaint by fax, mail or in person.
    - If no, the consumer can file a complaint over the phone but CCR will need to help the consumer figure out how to get needed documents to the Authority.
      - If no, did the consumer request an invoice?

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<sup>9</sup> The Consumer Protection Authority should reach out to the business community to collect such telephone numbers for use by the Call Center staff. Consideration should be given to publishing the list of phone numbers in brochures and other publications of the Authority as a public service. These brochures could potentially receive financial support from the companies listed in the brochure.

- If yes, did the merchant refuse to give one? (See next category of complaint)
  - If no, the CCR can educate the consumer on the need to request an invoice.
- The merchant failed to provide the consumer with a invoice
  - Did the consumer request an invoice?
    - If no, the CCR should explain to the consumer that the merchant is only required to provide an invoice if asked.
    - If yes, the CCR can proceed to complaint filing.
- The merchant provided inaccurate or misleading information about the goods/services
  - Does the consumer have documentation of the purchase (the invoice)?<sup>10</sup>
    - If yes, can the consumer fax or mail a copy (not original) to the Authority?
      - If yes, the consumer can file complaint by fax, mail or in person.
      - If no, the consumer can file complaint over the phone but the CCR will need to help the consumer figure out how to get needed documents to the Authority.
    - If no, did the consumer request an invoice?
      - If yes, did the merchant refuse to give one? See previous category of complaint.
      - If no, the CCR can educate the consumer on the need to request an invoice from all merchants.
  - Does the consumer have documentation of the inaccurate or misleading information given by the merchant? While both verbal and written misrepresentations are prohibited by the Consumer Protection Law, CCRs should explain to consumers that complaints about verbal misrepresentations often turn into "he said, she said" disputes which generally cannot be resolved.
- The merchandise I purchased is counterfeit – Consumer should be instructed on how to file a complaint with the IPR inspectors of the Ministry of Trade and Industry.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> While the Consumer Protection law does not require that consumers complain to the merchant before filing a complaint with the Authority, the Authority should encourage consumers to get in the habit of attempting to address complaints directly with merchants regardless of the type of complaint they have.

<sup>11</sup> Consideration should be given to how the Consumer Protection Authority could intervene in this area.

## Complaint Filing Process

If possible, CCRs should have consumers send in written complaints through the mail, by fax or the internet. Filing a written complaint ensures that consumers are serious about the complaint and will participate in the mediation process. Having the complaint in the consumers' own words also eliminates the chance of accusations being made that the CCR influenced the consumer or exaggerated his/her claim. For consumers who want them, forms can be provided that will guide them in the process. Alternatively, consumers can send the CCR a letter (by mail, fax or e-mail) that describes the dispute, the result they are seeking and provides contact information for both the consumer and the merchant.

Filing a written complaint, however, will be difficult if not impossible for illiterate or marginally literate consumers. While friends, family and religious or civic organizations can be called upon for assistance, eliciting such assistance may prove too burdensome for such consumers. Therefore, CCRs should be prepared to take consumer complaints by telephone, using the complaint form which will guide them through the information gathering process as quickly as possible.

Even if complaints are taken by telephone, however, it will be necessary in most cases for the consumer to provide the CCR with a copy of his/her invoice. Strategies will need to be developed for obtaining this information from consumers who do not have access to fax or copying machines (consumers should be encouraged to provide copies, not original documents which can be lost in the mail or Call Center office). While some local consumers may be able to hand deliver documents to the Call Center, this will be an inconvenient option, at best, for most consumers.

Once the CCR has gathered the necessary information or instructed the consumer on how to file a complaint, the CCR should explain to the consumer what will happen next (that is, the mediation process described in a separate memorandum) and approximately how long it will take. Call Center Reps will also need to be prepared to answer questions about what will happen if mediation fails, including: the investigation and possible hearing before the Authority's Dispute Settlement Tribunal and/or the need for the consumer to pursue the dispute through the courts with or without the assistance of consumer protection NGOs.

If the consumer is to file a complaint in writing, the Authority should consider whether it will want the CCRs to follow up with the consumer if the complaint does not come in. While this may be somewhat labor intensive, the Authority may want to know the reasons for the consumer's failure to follow through on filing the complaint. Was it because s/he perceived it to be too difficult, or because s/he did not think the Authority would be able to actually help? Did the complaint get resolved by the consumer and merchant directly, or did the consumer just decide that the dispute was not that important?

## **Information Gathering by the CCRs**

CCRs should have an electronic means of keeping track of the number and types of calls received from the public. This information will assist the authority learn about the kinds of problems that are of most concern to consumers and prepare strategies for assisting with those problems. Among other things the CCRs should track:

- the demographic profile caller, including age, gender, income level, education, and geographic region
- the type of product that is the subject of the call
- the type of practice that the caller is concerned about
- the types of problems that are outside the Call Center's jurisdiction and referred to other government agencies

## **Resources Needed for Consumer Call Center**

Besides the cost of infrastructure, the main expenses incurred in running a Consumer Call Center will be for the salaries of the Call Center Representatives and supervisory employees, the initial and on-going training of the CCRs, and technology to assist in monitoring the quality of service provided by the CCRS.

Training is extremely important to the success of a CCR in providing quality service to the public. In addition to learning the technical operation of the telephone and tracking equipment, CCRS must receive training in both the subject matter described above and professional telephone etiquette. Initial training for CCRs should be followed by regular "refresher courses" on problematic or difficult subjects. Training sessions should consist of both the verbal and written delivery of the subject matter and roll-play exercises that will prepare the CCRs for the kinds of situations they will experience.

To assist in quality control, the Authority should consider the recording of all calls received by the call center. Recorded calls can be useful in several ways. First, if CCRs know that the calls are recorded they will be motivated to handle all calls professionally and thoroughly. By reviewing recorded calls, supervisors can gather information on the skills that the CCRs may need additional training on and the calls themselves can serve as illustrations in training sessions. Finally, listening to such calls will provide the Authority with a wealth of information about the kinds of consumer awareness campaigns that are needed in the community.

## **Funding Sources**

By far, the most common source of funding the Consumer Call Centers is taxpayer money. In fact, this is the sole source of revenue for nearly all consumer call centers in the US.

The Ministry has indicated that it may wish to have the callers partially fund the Call Center's by using pay-per-call lines. While the cost of making these calls will be nominal, even that charge may be a deterrent to low-income consumers who would otherwise contact the Call Center.

Another possible source of funding may be the creation of a business-consumer NGO that will collect membership fees from its members and then transfer some or most of its funds to the Authority for the operation of the Call Center. In considering this possibility, the Authority will want to explore ways to protect the Call Center against the appearance of impropriety and/or bias. For example, the NGO would need to be structured so that consumer and business members have equal representation on the board of directors. Members should also be prohibited from advertising their membership in the NGO in conjunction with their sale of products or delivery of services.

Report Submitted By: Rebecca Bowman  
August 24, 2006

## **Attachment 1**

### **National Consumer Protection Society Brochure and Activity Report for 2005**

## شعارنا

### من أجل الوطن .. نحمي المستهلك

#### أناك عزيزي المستهلك

نحن بحاجة إلى مساندتك و تعاونك كي  
نتكّن سوياً من مواجهة ودرء ما يحيط  
بنا جميعاً من أخطار.

هيا نعي سوياً حقوقنا ومسؤولياتنا...  
هيا ننظم حملاتنا كمستهلكين لتكتسب  
القوة...

هيا نحمي أنفسنا من أجل حقنا العريقة

E-mail : [neqprotection@hotmail.com](mailto:neqprotection@hotmail.com)  
[www.consumerpro.org](http://www.consumerpro.org)

#### أعزائي المستهلكين

مرحباً بكم في الجمعية القومية لحماية المستهلك والتي أخذت على عاتقها الاهتمام بتعريف المستهلك بحقوقه وكيفية مواجهته للتداعيات من فضيحة لادرامع مدور، هذه البشارة التعريفية والتي أمل أن تصل لكل مستهلك عن أرض مصر عبر الجزيرة وأن تعيق هذيانا يهددنا بكارثة الجوعبة الجوزية وبساعاتها في شرب الكومبوت والبرق المعالجة والاعتماد على خبازة المستهلك وحدائقه في كل أنحاء وطننا طامش الوجه ليحكم برحانه...

أولا : دعوتكم لتعريف جميعنا والقوانين معها لتتعاون سوياً في إبراز دورها وممارستها في تحقيق ربه لها.

ثانياً : دعوتكم الأخرى وهي جميعكم للاهتمام بالجمعية فرساناً لتقوم بالسرور والسرور وعلقتا هو نوعية جميع المستهلكين يعقوبهم، ورسالتنا هي تشغل جهودنا جميعاً.

إن ما يعوق سرعة جمعيتنا قيامها بمهامها المصحة الرئيسية، تحقيق الأكبر والتقدير الأساسي هو قيام هذا عزيزي المستهلك، وما يقتضيه هو تضافر الجهد البشري، التكلفة جسيمة في شباب القادرين، إنما في مقادير المستهلكة، فالدعوات لتقوم بالمستهلك والمستهلك جميعاً كحسابية استهتت لو كشرة بعدا قائمة لا بالخدمات (أما) جدارها وهذا هو الأمن في دولة موكلة بالمستهلكين.

على من أمل أن تعدد تعاوناً لثبات عزيزي المستهلكة هل من أمل أن تطوّرنا جميعاً بالمستهلكين؟

نحن في انتظار رؤيتنا من الأمن، ونريد في قديمنا ومساكنه وتلك يد يده تدافع عن نفسها، حماية حقوقنا  
تذكر أنكم نحن نعدوكم لأمور وسامعكم بالظلمة، (أما) لنا، فرب لكم شيء جميعاً - عزيزي المستهلكة عزيزي المستهلكة - أمدان لأمور وأمننا للأمية...

ونحن نحسن الإدارة  
في رجب عوض الله

تليفون : ٣٦٨٧٣٧٨٨ - ٥٥٤٤٣٨٦٣٦  
البريد الإلكتروني : [neqprotection@hotmail.com](mailto:neqprotection@hotmail.com) - الجزيرة



## **Activity Report for 2005**

### **General Background**

#### **1- Message of the Society According to its Statute :**

The National Consumer Protection Society (NCPS) aims at supporting development efforts built around the concept of participation, gearing experiences and skills while gaining traction in connection with capacities in the society in order to overcome problems and find the appropriate solution. NCPS as well aims at providing assistance to the consumer with particular emphasis on defining his rights as adopted by the international community in 1985 and endorsed by Egypt in 1995, and helping him/her to obtain them, without infringement on the rights of producers, merchants or mediators, and through working in close collaboration with governmental bodies concerned, different civil society organizations, trade unions as well as the business sector.

For its goals to be duly substantiated, the Society needs to be lent support by all categories in the society alongside their cooperation and broad participation in decision-making so as to guarantee full compliance and proper implementation. It also welcomes any and all contribution to the development and promotion of its activities to ensure preservation of the environment, enhancement of the society and the conferring of moral and spiritual values on economic relations.

#### **2- Work Scope of the Society:**

El-Giza Governorate (the Society was established and its regulations registered at the Directorate of Social Affairs in El-Giza under the number 1756 / 20-4-2003)

#### **3- Working fields of the Society:**

Consumer Protection – Social Defense

#### **4- Board of Directors Quorum: 15 members**

#### **5- Committees of the Society: Board of Directors follows up the activities via a number of committees which are:**

- The Executive Committee
- The Committee on Public Relations and Information
- The Committee on Funding and Resources
- The Legal Committee
- The Committee on Planning and Programs
- The Committee on Complaints and Suggestions

#### **6- Targeted Categories: Community members in El-Giza Governorate given the fact that all citizens are generally believed to be consumers:**

## **7- Membership of Different Agencies**

- 1- The Committee on Defending the Egyptian Citizen within the framework of the Doctors' Syndicate. The Committee is designed to hold statutory meetings on monthly basis (First Sunday of every month)
- 2- COPOLCO (*International Egyptian Committee for Consumer Affairs*) within the framework of the *Egyptian Organization for Quality and Standardization*.
- 3- Full-fledged member of the Egyptian Centre in Support of Civil Organizations (NGOs).

Based on its message, the Society is committed, ever since its establishment, to normally depend on the participation of individuals, the targeted category, in choosing key issues and problems and developing the issue into some kind of certain requirements to lobby public support and more or less have influence on the decision making process.

The year 2005 marks the third anniversary of the Society activities during which it played a vital and effective role through the elaboration of new activities and services to ensure its sustainability towards communicating the message underlying its foundation.

The next report includes the classified activities the Society has conducted and they are as follows:

### **First: Conferences & Symposiums**

#### **1- The Society has Participated in the Following Symposiums:**

- 1- Consumer Protection and Combating Price Hikes
- 2- Energy-Saving
- 3- Highlighting the Significance of Energy Efficiency Specifications of Home Appliances
- 4- Consumer Protection and Social Security

#### **2- Symposiums Organized by the Society:**

- 1- Consumer Protection within the Framework of the Law on the Protection of Competition and the Prevention of Monopolistic Practices.
- 2- On the Consumer Protection Global Day, Where is the Egyptian Consumer?
- 3- The Society held its first hearing session addressing the Educational Symposium Program (third stage) at El- Brageel Culture House to listen to the opinions and the viewpoints of the parties concerned regarding problems of drainage and healthcare services provided by the medical unit located at El- Brageel.

## **Second: Courses & Workshops**

### **1- The Society Has Participated in the Following Courses & Workshops:**

The Society has participated in a seminar entitled "*Governmental and Civil Organizations & Consumer Protection*" held at the Ministry of Information – State Information Service at the Nile Centre for Information and Education, Tanta.

The Society has organized a number of courses and workshops within the framework of the Institutional and Capacity-Building Project funded by the Non-governmental Organizations Service Center, as follows:

- 1- Building the Grassroots
- 2- Public Administration
- 3- Administration of Volunteers
- 4- Incorporating Social Gender Concepts
- 5- Activating the Role of Committees
- 6- Questionnaires on Consumers' Satisfaction

### **Third: Contests:**

Within the framework of educational symposiums dedicated for young people in collaboration with EL-Giza-based Culture Directorate, and in reference to the announcement on artistic and literary competition to which a number of frequenters of El- Barageel Culture House have submitted their works, the prize- awarding ceremony was held on July 11, 2005 at El-Brageel Culture House premises in respect of the Educational Symposium Program (second stage). The value of prizes was put at L.E. 200, distributed to 10 winners in consumer protection contests. The Society also granted participants Certificates of Merit and commended the performance of El-Barageel Culture House manager, Mr Ahmed Mustafa, for the facilities he offered to help enrich the Program.

## **Fourth: Consumers' Complaints**

Attempting to deal with the complaints it receives, the Society has approved a number of steps as follows:

- 1- Adopting conciliatory solutions and bringing viewpoints closer for the purpose of reaching an acceptable way-out in favor of the two parties to the complaint.
- 2- If a violation is verified with no solution in sight, the Society shall notify the competent authority.

The Society has specified a number of procedures regarding any complaint according to the following order:

- 1- Collect full data about the complainant (maintaining their confidentiality if the society so requests).

- 2- Inform the complainant of his/her rights and obligations.
- 3- Present documents related to the commodity or service subject of complaint (invoice- warranty- utilization instructions...etc).
- 4- Investigate into and verify the complaint.
- 5- Address the person against whom the complaint is submitted (owner of a shop or a plant or a purchasing facility.....etc) to listen to his/her viewpoint.
- 6- Should the person against whom the complaint is submitted fails to respond or if the relevant conciliatory solution is not applicable, the following procedures shall be pursued:
  - Contact the Control Agency with which the complaint is affiliated.
  - Specify steps taken and their dates.
  - Follow up with the officials pending the complaint is settled or a response received on the part of the agency concerned.
  - Feedback the complainant on the results.
  - Provide legal assistance for the complainant upon request.

### **Classification of Complaints Received by the Society**

<b>Classification of Complaints</b>	<b>Number of Complaints</b>
Electric Devices and Cellular Sets	20
Foodstuffs	4
Actions of Obstruction	3
Health & Hospitals	2
Cosmetics	1
Invoices & Commercial Fraud	10
Cleaning& Garbage Collection	7
Environment Pollution	2
Public Transportation	2
Furniture	3
Garments & Footwear	5
Utilities & Services	2
Communications	2
Vehicles	1

#### **Fifth: Information-based Activity**

The information-related activity of the Society has been extended to include a number of announcements, interviews, reportages (*Alahram- Alakhbar- El-gomhoriya- Alwafd- Almasry Elyoum- Nahdet Masr-Alaraby- Alaharm Aleqtesady- Alalam Alyoum- Megelat Al-amal- Al-gamaher....*) in addition to a number of broadcasting dialogue-oriented programs. (*Albarnameg Alam- Albarnameg Alsaqafy- Alsharq Alawsat Alqahera Alkobra- Al-ezaa Alekhbareya...*) *weltefezonya* (Land and satellite channels)

#### **Sixth: Legal Actions:**

The Society was involved in the Action No 20337 for 58 Judicial, circuit of individual affairs, State Council, at the session held on Tuesday, February 15, 2005 and filed by lawyer, Mr. Abdel Moneim Abdel Rahman, on refunding cleaning fees.

**Secretary General  
Chairman**

**Mr. Magdy Fahmy Matloob  
Awadallah**

**Board of Directors'**

**Dr. Zainab**

## **Attachment 2**

### **National Consumer Protection Society Summaries of Consumer Complaints**

### Consumers' Complaints for 2006

<b>Serial Number</b>	<b>Type of Complaints</b>	<b>Total Number of Complaints</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
1	<b>Appliances</b>	39	
2	<b>Cellular sets</b>	6	
3	<b>Telecommunications/ Internet</b>	9	
4	<b>Utilities and Services</b>	4	
5	<b>Invoices &amp; Foodstuffs</b>	1/21	
6	<b>Vehicles</b>	6	
7	<b>Commercial Fraud</b>	11	
8	<b>Cleaning&amp; Electricity</b>	20/1	
9	<b>Training Centers</b>	1	
10	<b>Health</b>	1	
11	<b>Public Transportation</b>	2	
12	<b>Maintenance Centre</b>	4	
13	<b>Furniture</b>	1	
14	<b>Air Conditions</b>	3	
15	<b>Spare Parts</b>	3	
16	<b>Garments&amp; Footwear</b>	11/5	
17	<b>Pesticide</b>	1	
<b>Total Number</b>		<b>150</b>	

م	تاريخ ورود الشكاوى	الشكاوى	المشكو في حقه	نوع الشكاوى	سبب الشكاوى	الرد على الشكاوى
١	٢٠٠٦/١/٢	أ/ أمين عماد الدين الأيوبي	شركة دلتا كيمونيكيشن	أجهزة	عند قيام الشاكي بشحن موبايل سوني إيريكسون حدث شروخ بالشاشة وهو مازال في فترة الضمان وعندما توجه للتوكيل الكائن في ٩٨ محي الدين ابو العز والذي قام بالشراء منه رفض اصلاحه بالضمان .	- في ٢٠٠٦/١/٣ تم تسليم ختم بالشكاوى الى رئيس مجلس ادارة شركة دلتا كيمونيكيشن - في ٢٠٠٦/١/٥ تم ارسال فاكس الى د. عثمان زين الدين رئيس مجلس ادارة شركة دلتا كيمونيكيشن . - في ٢٠٠٦/١/٦ جاءنا الرد من د. عثمان زين الدين رئيس مجلس ادارة شركة دلتا كيمونيكيشن . - في ٢٠٠٦/١/٨ تم ارسال فاكس بالشكاوى الى المهندس / محمد حسن رئيس وحدة حماية المستهلك ببيئة المواصلات والجودة . - في ٢٠٠٦/١/٢٦ تم ارسال مذكرة تعرض فيها ما اسفرت عنه الشكاوى في حق شركة دلتا كيمونيكيشن الى كل من : المهندس / محمد حسن رئيس وحدة حماية المستهلك ببيئة المواصلات والجودة / محمود عيسى رئيس هيئة المواصلات والجودة . - في ٢٠٠٦/٢/٦ تم الاتصال ب د/ محمد حسن وعليه تم اعادة ارسال الشكاوى بناء على طلبه و التي سبق وتم ارسالها اليه وذلك لاتخاذ الجراءات اللازمة .
٢	٢٠٠٦/١/١٥	أ/ محمود ابراهيم ابو منصور ت/ ٣٥١٥٧٦٣	شركة رينج لضمان أجهزة المصنوع نوكتيا الكائنة في ٧٠ شارع المرغلي - مصر الجديدة	أجهزة محمول	قام الشاكي بالتوجه لشركة المنكورة لتصلح جهازه المحمول ماركة نوكتيا موديل ٣٢٠٠ في فترة الضمان واعطوه موعدا لاستلامه وعندما ترجمه اليهم في الميعاد المحدد اخبروه بتحديد ميعاد اخر لعدم وجود قطعة غيار وعندما توجه اليهم ثانية في الميعاد الثاني	- في ٢٠٠٦/١/١٧ تم الاتصال بالشاكي للتأكيد عليه قبل السير في الاجراءات فأخبرنا بأنه بعد ان قام بتحرير محضر بقم شريطة مصر الجندية قامت الشركة بتسليمه جهازه المحمول سليم ولا يوجد به عيوب .

٢٨ شارع الحسن - المهندسون - النقى ت ٤٤ ٣٨٧٦٣١ محمول ٣٤٤١٨٤٣ - ١٠٠  
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